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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

# The Onlooker

*A Literary Journal of Independent Critical Opinion on Public Affairs*

Vol. II—No. 1 TORONTO, MAY, 1921 Price—20c.

## For the People

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# THE ONLOOKER

JAMES COBOURG HODGINS, Editor

A Literary Journal of Independent Critical Opinion on Public Affairs

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## PRESIDENT HARDING'S INVITATION TO CANADA TO GAZE SOUTHWARDS

WE have no doubt that President Harding's invitation to the Canadian people to gaze southwards for future inspiration and guidance in a recent speech was honestly and sincerely meant. Any good thing the United States may have to offer us in the future we shall, of course, gladly accept. We realize our imperfections as a people and are not above learning. It is characteristic of the Canadian people that, like the Greeks in the Areopagus, they are rather credulously eager just at present "to tell and to hear some new thing." Young democracies are always that way. Did not James Russell Lowell once write a rather caustic essay directed against England entitled "On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners"? The novel, the untried, has an almost irresistible attraction for turbulent and adventurous youth; and this applies not only to individuals but also to nations.

We have taken a good deal from the United States as it is. The folk to the south of us ought, indeed, to feel flattered at our easy-going complaisance. We are deluged with their cheap publications, dazzled by their movies, sometimes enlightened and oftentimes bewildered by their orators and lecturers, and have meekly followed them in their various bizarre religious enthusiasms. Baseball and not cricket is our national game; Greek-letter societies flourish in our midst; our unions are largely international; we have adopted the college yell. By a device of sheer hypocrisy we boast Sunday papers, and have taken to our hearts the American cartoons—which have this ethical touch, that they have made vulgarity and bad drawing monotonous.

We are, indeed, a kindly and hospitable people. We do not blame those Americans who, generalizing from a superficial survey of the situation, have come to the conclusion that Canada is rapidly becoming Americanized. It may be permissible, however, to point out certain deep-seated differences between the two countries, differences which, just because they are fundamental and of the blood, are not apparent at first glance, to the casual traveller, and, indeed, are rarely grasped in their full significance even by cultivated Americans. It is just possible that an invitation to our American cousins to look northwards for light and guidance on the subject of democracy

might be quite in order; though, to be sure, in questionable taste. We have no intention of extending such an invitation, bearing in mind the splendid futility involved in attempting "to paint the rose" or "add another hue unto the rainbow."

In answer to President Harding's kind invitation we would say that we propose, as a people willing to learn, to give full credit for any real benefit received not only to the United States, but to Italy, France, China, Japan or Patagonia. The wanderer in Goldsmith's fine poem exclaims: "Creation's heir, the world, the world is mine." We really feel that way. We may humbly be prepared to admit that in the matter of freedom we are far behind our friends to the south; but we are young, and some day we may see the utter folly of dispensing with the professional boss and the iron-bound and unchangeable party caucus. We may, indeed, come to it; but not until we have lost all faith, not in so-called free institutions, but in the tonic regenerative and exhilarating qualities of a free political *atmosphere*. We may admit that American tailors are the best fitters of the human figure in the world, yet prefer to wear our clothes loosely in the British style. We may even admit that the spectacle of a nation that has survived all shocks and changes for almost a century and a half of recorded time (including a bloody civil war and three assassinations), and which to-day is stronger than ever before in its history, is a quite unique phenomenon, and yet stubbornly prefer our own antiquated way of doing things. "A poor thing, but mine own," exactly expresses our idea of Canadian democracy. We must reject the perfection offered to achieve a perfection of our own.

The plain truth is, of course, that the American conception of freedom is different from ours. It may be better, or it may be worse; time alone will tell; but it is different, and the difference is fundamental. The United States made an entirely new start when the umbilical cord with Britain was cut. The American people, perhaps unconsciously, reverted to the classic, symmetrical type of government. They, or their thinkers (Hamilton and Jefferson principally) started in to create an ideal commonwealth *on paper*. They had the whole past of human experience to draw upon, and were fortunate in this, that the framers of the Constitution were, for the greater part, typical English gentlemen deeply imbued with the learning and culture of their time, which it is needless to point out was classical. It was not perfect—what brand-new constitution ever is?—but again they were fortunate, for these experimenters in the region of abstract politics were followed by great jurists like Marshall and Jay and others who insidiously and skilfully, through a series of brilliant decisions, moulded the whole fabric to its present shape. Without them it would have, in time, collapsed. It is not

too much to say that it is to its great lawyers that the United States owes its survival, and this is only to say that the typical genius of the English race triumphed over all obstacles. Bagehot once wrote that "good lawyers could work any will and the people of Massachusetts could work any constitution." Among a Latin people the Constitution of the United States, as an unchangeable, symmetrical thing, could not last twenty-four hours. Only a people trained by centuries of struggle and self-mastery could possibly make a success of an *a priori* thought-out system of government, such as the Constitution is. Without England there would have been no America. Magna Charta, the Bill of Rights, the Act of Settlement, did not culminate in the Constitution as their final literary flower; but in the struggle to attain these, and in the triumph of religious freedom, a type of man was produced in Britain capable of standing alone—at once beneath and above law. This enfranchised man in a new world, this bold pioneer on the ocean of political experiment became a human realization of a dim dream that had always haunted the English imagination. It was inevitable that some such an attempt at creating an ideal government should be made somewhere by Englishmen. The English people are at once practical and strangely mystical. "The young men see visions and the old men dream dreams." This is one of the characteristics of the race that make it so baffling, elusive and enigmatic to foreigners. It explains the charge of hypocrisy, which is based on ignorance. A simple catalogue of the ideal commonwealths projected by the English brain will go far to explain the *raison d'être* of the American republic. Leaving Ralph Pococke and the Lollards out, as also Wat Tyler (the Bolshevik of his day), let us start with Sydney's *Arcadia* as the first of big, beautiful social dreams. There follow Moore's *Utopia*, Bacon's *Atlantis*, Phineas Fletcher's *Purple Island*, Harrington's *Oceana*. The list might be indefinitely extended. It is still being added to. No other nation is inclined this way. The English have been charged with being a nation of shop-keepers; they might better be charged with being a nation of dreamers and idealists. Swift was never more caustic or brilliant than when he was engaged in satirizing this romantic tendency of the English mind to idealize the future. Shakespeare does it lightly and surely in "The Tempest."

With the exception of Campanella's "City of the Sun," there are no corresponding visions in the literature of any other modern people. At this very hour the British magazines are full to repletion with schemes of ideal reconstruction—ideal commonwealths. It is in the blood. France, always logical and utterly devoid of mysticism in political affairs, is fiercely for the present hour. She destroys at a blow and recreates as by magic. An English cathedral

is, as a rule, a mixture of all styles, but the Gothic of the *Isle de France* is as complete and perfect as a Greek temple. Once the chance, in a new world, was given to the Anglo-Saxon folk to create an entirely new commonwealth after its own heart it was eagerly embraced. But it was new only as a form, an intellectual creation. The psychology of the people did not change and could not change. The English case-law survived, the love of precedent survived, the original constitutions of the various states remained unaltered. To this day in South Carolina it is impossible to get a divorce for any reason whatsoever—an archaic but stubbornly held survival.

And what is still more curious, making the United States Constitution absolutely unique as an instrument of government, the whole range of social duties was left out. They were left to be decided by jurists. The Constitution dealt almost wholly with the nature and operation of the delicate balances between the states, in the harmonious play of which success was alone possible or even conceivable. We may say that an age-old dream, a tendency of racial psychology definitely crystallized out, but it did crystallize, and it seems as rigid as bronze at this hour. It may be perfect, the last word in political sagacity, the mountain of vision to which all nations shall finally come, but this much is certain—only men of Anglo-Saxon heredity could possibly work it. They have heretofore done so and are doing so, and it is miraculous. There it stands—cold, perfect of its kind, bloodless. Will it stand for ever? Yes, if the type of men who created it survive in purity of blood and ideals. No, if the character of the people should change. Let a composite race be formed made up of all alien mixtures, let a group of radical and reckless jurists, *e.g.*, sit upon the bench of the Supreme Court in place of the noble masters of equity who, at this hour, guard with wise jealousy the fundamental law, and the Constitution, as an unchangeable thing, will disappear.

As a matter of fact, we have long gazed southwards in awe and wonder, but not for enlightenment in political affairs or purity in civic administration. The marvel to us has always been the survival of a democracy under the rigid forms of an almost unchangeable constitution. Modification with us is a constant experience. We are quite used to it. It has no novelty. English politics is a seething sea of political change, and these changes are sometimes fundamental, germinal. The Britain of to-day is not the Britain of a year ago. For good or ill our Constitution is always up to date, and every fresh law is a fresh advance. We are a democracy—the loosest and freest in the world—but the people of the United States are controlled by an elaborate system of legal check and balance which, while it leaves the individual free and nobly free in all his wide human relations, nevertheless prescribes the path in which he

must walk politically. Judged by the pragmatic test it works, and that is all that can be said in its favor. It would not work in Canada, in New Zealand, in Australia, and certainly not in Britain, for in all these lands the fundamental conviction, fiercely held, is that the House of Commons is supreme, and that that chamber must, in the last analysis, bow to the popular demand for change. With us the clear will of the majority cannot be thwarted, and once that will is enacted into law there is an end of the matter. If the law be bad it can be abrogated; if good it is a permanent gain. Freedom with us is not a matter of definition; it is the free play of life, creating ever newer and newer forms.

The rude shock of the American Revolution, humbling at the time to English pride, in reality enfranchised the parent race and, in time, produced what we would dare to call the freest democracy in the world. So far as the art of government is concerned England has very little to learn from America and Canada less. It is America that is now the laggard on the field of time. It has outgrown its clothes.

It is the difference between the *a priori* and the *a posteriori*, between political orthodoxy and unchangeableness and a tried faith in instincts that seem almost to have become a part of the nature of things. To say in the United States, "It is unconstitutional," is to finish the business. Laws in that country may be said to be enacted under the awful shadow of the Supreme Court; whereas in Britain the Government is supreme and the courts simply exist to interpret the free and unfettered decisions of Parliament. Which is the freer country—England or America? Why should we look south? It is east over the grey Atlantic surges we should look, to the great sources of constitutional government; to a land which knows no written constitution and which has made the happy discovery that the only safe state is one that is as loose as liberty and as strong as love and loyalty.

The plain truth is, of course, that the United States is behind Britain in the matter of political evolution. Bryce, when sitting as a spectator in the House of Representatives, found himself speculating as to what great changes that "dim grey chamber" would witness in the future. Well he might! "As for prophecy, it shall fail," yet one may venture on prophecy, which, after all, is only a guess. We will venture, then, to assert that the present condition of things in the United States cannot last. The people of that land, and it cannot be avoided, will discover some day that written constitutions are not immortal, and that sooner or later political rigidity of any kind is death. It is the fate of all orthodoxies to die and in dying to recover life and power. In the tremendous march of the species in the direction of an ideal, kings, parliaments, presidents,

congresses, constitutions, must either be transformed by the renewing of their natures or go the way of all formal things, whatever truth they enshrined remaining as a common heritage. The Constitution of the United States is not sacred. As modified by successive legal decisions it works at this hour. It is now a venerable instrument. But its survival has been and must continue to be through the use of the happiest discovery of all law—legal fiction—and if a race of inferior or corrupt jurists should succeed the present able men who shed lustre on the whole legal profession throughout the world, it is self-evident that it will crumble into dust and be numbered with the Pandects of Justinian and the Cartularies of Charlemagne.

This is the danger, and it is an ever-present one. It is indeed because we in Canada have arrived *per saltum* at the sound, free vigorous practice of subordinating the courts to Parliament that we see no reason why we should look south. We stand, because of the grave risks of unfettered political decision, in jeopardy every hour, to be sure, but we do not fear, because, as a people, we have stood in jeopardy through so many crises and yet have miraculously survived. Actual freedom is a wonderful tonic and but deepens and intensifies the sense of responsibility. It may, indeed, be said that freedom *is* responsibility, and that when men rest upon instruments, however philosophical and perfect, for security they know not what true freedom is. For after all freedom is but a gesture, a step, an impulse. It is the daring of an experiment hitherto untried. The beaten path, the well-marked trail, the walled security, the carefully written word acquiesced in as final and perfect and, or soon or late, stagnation and death must result.

And now we come to the very crux of this argument. Canada is necessary as a balance-wheel on this continent to the United States. Annexation would mean not only the extinction of our national soul and of all we hold dear, but it would mean death to our neighbor. We have here on this continent two democracies representing two distinct and natural developments from a parent-stem. Canada is Britain next door.

We are prepared to learn; we may have something to impart. The revolution was an earthquake which violently changed the course of the great stream of racial life. A new human river with a source of its own was then formed, which has been flowing for over a century now through a virgin land of incredible richness and beauty. It had its source in ideal heights. But the old well-head all the while kept throwing up life-giving streams and those streams found new channels and are finding new channels. Yet, however far they wandered, in whatever strange lands, in every drop and particle they felt and still feel the primal pulsation of the living original fountain. We have never broken with England; we do not intend

to break. We must not strain the metaphor, but if this be not the true river of freedom both in the case of Britain and the United States then the outlook for the human family is dark indeed; for if men of Anglo-Saxon lineage cannot solve the problems of political stability the beast has it and will in the end prevail. We take a higher counsel of our heart. It is our reasoned conviction that the United States will in the end come to the fundamental conviction, at which the Empire has already arrived, that liberty rests for its security not on unchangeable legal forms, but on the spirit. The fiction that the Constitution is already perfect will go the way of the divine right of kings; the Senate will sink or rise to the status of a purely revisory body; the House of Representatives will in the end dominate and its conclusions will take precedence and have the right of way. And this will all come to pass subtly, insidiously, but none the less irresistibly, since the conclusions of men once alive, no matter how much they may have been endowed with genius, cannot be permitted for ever to rule in the affairs of a world which keeps growing and thriving and changing.

The British Constitution was the happiest accident of time. It was a case of instinct recognizing the true prince. The British Empire was the creation not of kings or philosophers or encyclopædists, but of plain, strong citizens who solved every problem as it arose and whose decisions, just because they were based on common-sense and equity, passed into the great deposit of law and precedent. It was not created by jurists coming to definite, unchangeable conclusions, but by sanity and wisdom. It rests to-day not on legislation, but on the persistence of type. As long as the Empire breeds great men and women it will be secure from all the shocks of change, and this is true of the United States. There is a further step in evolution awaiting the United States. It is fortunate in this, that the region into which it must enter is not an unknown land, for its brethren are already there and they know that the land is good. England, to be sure, at this hour is sitting in "the seat perilous," but

"She sees the long advance in looking back,
Thence trust in her foot forward through the storm."

To the invitation to look southwards for light and guidance we of British blood and breeding can only reply: "We shall continue to remember the rock whence we were hewn." We have taken the final step in political evolution. Democracy with us is not in bud, but in full flower. Why should we look back to a fixed, rigid, and almost unalterable constitution? We gave all that up when we discarded the worn-out doctrine of the divine right of kings.

## THE MARTHA MAGINN PARTY

By "Occidentalis"

WHEN the Hon. T. A. Crerar set out to conquer Canada with the aid of the U.F.O., the U.F.A., the U.G.G., and other fearful and wonderful alphabetical aggregations, he entered upon an undertaking of some magnitude. It is true that the circumstances appeared propitious. It is true that hope told a flattering, but not altogether unreasonable tale, to which he lent a credulous ear that bespoke an engaging simplicity if not a particularly ripe political judgment. With the war over, and the huge task of reconstruction well begun, some disintegration of parties was probably inevitable. All honor to those Liberals who at a time of national stress helped to make the Unionist Government what it was. All honor to them, and to Mr. Crerar as one of them. We would not willingly steal a ray from his aureole, a feather from his wing, a leaf from his laurels. We would not rob him of an atom of the credit to which he is entitled. But with the stimulus of a great crisis removed, it was perhaps natural that some of those who had joined the Conservatives should revert to their old party love even though she had changed so sadly as to be almost unrecognizable. There was certainly a melancholy difference between the blooming Liberalism of Laurier's palmy days and the poor trollop squired by Mackenzie King. But still there were those who would be constant even to beauty in disastrous eclipse, who would seek in the dishevelled wreck some lingering charm of buxom youth. Loyalty is an admirable thing, and even a mistaken loyalty is entitled to some respect. Example is contagious. Men may come and men may go, and Mr. Crerar decided to be one of the men who go, particularly as there were likely to be some fat things in the way of political advantage to be picked up in the shuffle.

Unlike those whose "faith unfaithful kept them falsely true" to their old Liberal love, Mr. Crerar had another sweetheart to whom he paid assiduous court. Some of the farmers, waxing fat on war profits, or a little jealous perhaps of the scraps which they fancied fell to others, had already begun to kick. Others, indignant that no peculiar sacrosanctitude attached to themselves or their sons at that period of conscription when men were even more urgently needed than food, were ready to disown all political parties, and resolved to set up in business for themselves. Begotten of various motives, with some of which it is not very difficult to feel a certain sympathy, the United Farmers' movement sprang into being. Reversing the usual order, the farmers decided to beat their ploughshares into swords—political swords with which to slay all who

refused to acknowledge the new political creed with Crerar for its prophet, Drury and Morrison as emirs in the east, and H. W. Wood as its pasha of nine tails in the west. The United Farmers' movement was "fair to see"—Ontario succumbed to its charms—but Messrs. Crerar and Drury were, Shakespeare notwithstanding, eager to gild refined gold and paint the lily. Properly painted and gilded, it ceased to be the farmers' movement and assumed a new dignity as the National Progressive party. Or the case may be put in another way. Most people have heard of Miss Martha Maginn,

> Who was so very pure within,
> She burst the outer shell of sin,
> And hatched herself a cherubin.

Under the vivifying warmth of a wider sympathy—or the stress of political expediency—the United Farmers' movement burst the sinful shell of class selfishness, and hatched itself (or "broadened out," was it?) into a full-fledged political party. Mr. Crerar's new party is, in fact, the Martha Maginn of politics. The identification is positive. The sly suggestion of superabundant righteousness clinches it.

There is ample evidence—for which consult Mr. Morrison—that the imposing metamorphosis of the Martha Maginn party has not been effected painlessly in the east. The rumors which reach us here in the benighted west suggest that many of the farmers are not vastly pleased with the transformation, nor is there much assurance that it is complete and final. As for the west itself, the assurance seems all the other way. Poor Martha's development has been rudely arrested. Judging by events in Alberta, at any rate, she is, by some miracle of retrograde metamorphosis, being pushed back into the shell again. Mr. Crerar's pet ambition finds little favor; and the National Progressive party, wherever it may progress—possibly to its true place in the limbo of political dreams—stands little chance of justifying its first title as a force to be reckoned with in national politics. It was, indeed, in the west, at Winnipeg, that its advent was proclaimed. Now Medicine Hat throws down the gauntlet to Winnipeg—Wood neatly counters Crerar.

Before this article sees the light the contest in the Medicine Hat constituency to fill the vacancy created by the death of the Hon. A. L. Sifton may possibly have become a matter of ancient history. Whatever the result, however, what is now written may have some value as helping to define more clearly the true nature and meaning of the election. Should Mr. Gardner, the U.F.A. candidate, be returned—which heaven forefend!—this will undoubtedly be a victory for the farmers, but it will be a victory for farmers in revolt against those who aspire, and profess, to lead them. Messrs. Crerar

and Drury would have little cause for satisfaction. They would have no reason to cock their beavers with jaunty pride. The triumph would be none of theirs, and the circumstances attending it would, rightly considered, deal a shrewd blow to the prestige of the National Progressive party.

In a recent issue of THE ONLOOKER the writer dealt with the perplexities of the average Alberta farmer, halting between two opinions, hesitating as to whether he was to join with kindred spirits in political activity, or whether he must play the part of an Ishmaelite, striking an attitude of absolute aloofness. There was, it was intimated, no perplexity about Mr. Wood, the president of the U. F. A., no hesitation about Mr. Harris, who was at one time deemed the most likely man to carry the farmers' standard in the Medicine Hat riding. Right or wrong, Mr. Wood at least knew his own mind, and eighteen months ago, on the occasion of the provincial by-election in the Cochrane district, expressed in unequivocal terms his preference for a strictly separatist or "group" organization. "Broadening out" had positively no attractions for him. As a Missourian—for Mr. Wood is, or was, an American, like so many of those who are kindly teaching us poor Albertans how we should be governed—as a Missourian Mr. Wood desired to be "shown," and evidently Mr. Crerar was unable to show him anything which made the charms of Martha Maginn irresistibly seductive. It was pointed out in THE ONLOOKER article that Mr. Wood had never repented or recanted. There is certainly little evidence of a change of heart in his utterances at the nominating convention held at Medicine Hat some time ago.

It is abundantly clear that Mr. Wood still stands as firmly by the rigid exclusiveness of the farmers' organization as if it were the only badge of virtue. At Medicine Hat as at Cochrane, his ideal was the "efficient group," and he significantly warned his hearers that "they could not put two viewpoints in the one movement." Mr. Harris was even more explicit. The farmers of Medicine Hat did not, he declared, hold with the views expressed by the Hon. T. A. Crerar at the annual convention in Edmonton that there was an "open door" to anybody outside the farmers who would adopt the farmers' platform. "We are solidly behind H. W. Wood, president of the U.F.A.," he added; "and we will not admit anyone to membership who is not actually a farmer."

There is no chance of misunderstanding here. This is not merely closing the "open door," but closing it with a bang. This is not merely closing it against the poor pariahs who do not belong to the sacred caste of the farmers, but, rightly understood, slamming it on the pert, pious nose of Martha Maginn herself. So far as one section of Alberta is concerned, the hapless Martha is thrust ruth-

lessly into the shell once more. If Mr. Wood and Mr. Harris speak for the U.F.A.—and the one is the president, the other an important official of the association—that body and the National Progressive party have different viewpoints, involving difference of aims, and difficulty or impossibility in securing cordial or efficient co-operation. The National Progressive party is, in fact, definitely in the discard, and those who have been coquetting with labor or the returned soldiers are sharply rebuked for their giddy philandering. Should Alberta go with Mr. Wood the contagion may readily spread to other provinces, and with an easy flight of the imagination one can picture a western courtier of King Crerar entering the august presence, and stammering with blanched and trembling lips, "Sire, this is not revolt, but revolution."

The situation is one of decided interest to the political speculator. If he be a wise man, he will hesitate to prophesy or dogmatize as to what it may bring forth. The Alberta farmer has now a strong lead from Medicine Hat, but he may be pardoned if he still finds himself in a puzzling predicament. The ways are open to him: he has the privilege—and the embarrassment—of choice. He may even yet yield to the blandishments of the cherubic Martha Maginn, only to find that she is "no better than she should be," and no less prone, despite her pretensions to superior virtue, to cheap tricks of partisan harlotry than the flightiest jade that ever ogled a disgusted electorate. Or the farmer may choose to play the game of "follow my leader" with Mr. Wood, and discover that politics, like poverty, makes a man acquainted with strange bedfellows.

Unless it be to an intense and aggravated selfishness there is certainly little to attract in the creed of Mr. Wood. According to the uncontradicted newspaper reports of his utterances at the time of the Cochrane election, he preached one of the most drearily narrow gospels ever urged upon a civilized community. He and his associates seem to have wandered far from the ideal of his famous countryman. The Gettysburg address, with its government of the people, by the people, for the people, is sadly out of date. The new ideal is apparently government of the people by a rigidly exclusive group for the interests of that group alone, unless some other can in its turn acquire an organized strength which will enable it to wrest some little advantage for itself. Nothing surely could be more unethical or antisocial than this creed of organized selfishness, which is no product of a double dose of original sin on the part of Mr. Wood or his friends, but lies at the root of the whole "group" system. Nothing could be more fatal to the growth of a higher and purer morality in politics or government. Mr. Wood's followers must not be Canadians but merely farmers; they must not be citizens in the best and most liberal sense of the word, but mere clamourers and squabblers for a sordid class advantage.

Apart from the unmoral ugliness of such class antagonism the U.F.A. is in danger from its obsession by a legion of crack-brained theorists with all kinds of visionary schemes for revolutionizing our commerce, currency, banking and fiscal relations. Mr. Wood may be a strong man—he is undoubtedly an able man—but could he, or, for that matter, could Mr. Crerar, put these people of unbalanced brains in their proper place? Could he repel the invasion or control the triumphs of that Townleyism which has made the name of North Dakota a byword over the continent? The Alberta farmers are, as a class, men of shrewd common-sense and breadth of outlook. It would be strange if they did not eschew alliance with the crank or extremist, and resent being placed in a position of antagonism toward their fellow-Canadians of other "groups," who are for the most part recruited from, and readily return to, the ranks of the farmers themselves. It would be strange if many of them—many more than Mr. Crerar and Mr. Wood dream of in their philosophy—should not be disposed to say to Martha Maginn and her rival, "a plague on both your houses." They know that what Canada wants now more than ever is not class war, pragmatism, empiricism or reckless tinkering with her vital interests, but a strong, vigilant, self-consistent government which will amend without revolution, loosen the bonds where a greater freedom is indicated, and protect where protection is needed. They know where they can get such a government, and will surely act on the knowledge.

Edmonton, Alta.

## THE NATIONAL RAILWAYS

IT may be stated as axiomatic that the people of Canada will not submit to a complete private monopoly of transportation under one management. They are by no means appalled at the deficit of $70,000,000, any more than they are intimidated by the debt of two and a half billions. Our debt is largely owing to ourselves. Our railways are partly under our control, and those still in private hands are under the jurisdiction of Parliament. All this talk of handing over the Canadian National Railways to the C.P.R. may as well be abandoned. Papers like the *Montreal Gazette*, which have come out openly for this cowardly, selfish solution may as well put on the soft pedal and fade out. We are not a race of cowards. The future has no terrors for us. We know that the future is ours, and that we are competent to carry whatever burden may be necessary to discharge our obligations with honor. We propose to do so.

The president of the C.P.R. would be well advised *not* to offer gratuitous advice to the C.N.R. management. The national system is as well managed as its natural rival and no higher compliment

could be paid it. At any rate, government management must be given a fair trial. There has not been time for the experiment to fully develop out. It may be that the Canadian people are incapable (though we do not believe it) of successfully carrying out a great, and we will venture to say unique, experiment. Time alone will tell; but a problem so vast, which comes home so intimately and directly to each member of the community, must not be treated save in a broad national way. To be more precise: the question whether Canada should or should not continue government ownership should be submitted to the whole people and all the facts of the situation made clear before any steps are taken to change the *status quo.* Certainly no group of men, no matter how astute in finance or successful in managing large operations, should be given authority to do as they conclude best without a direct warrant from the people at large. That is to say, this present Parliament must carry on in accordance with conclusions arrived at when the Canadian Northern Railway was taken over. That legislation stands, and the time has not come to abrogate it. Time will but confirm the wisdom of the decision. We do not for a single moment believe that those in control at Ottawa at this moment meditate any such step. It is a pity all the same that reckless newspapers should, for obvious party ends, hint at drastic changes in the management and seek to convey the impression that the Government is dissatisfied at the showing made. It is not.

That showing is not at all bad; it is, in fact, extraordinarily good, all things considered. The Canadian National Railways lifted the great sum of over one hundred and eleven millions during its last financial year. Out of this it paid transportation, motive power, management, and one-fourth of betterments. It should be remembered that since the outbreak of war the system was dislocated and betterments necessarily deferred. The showing is really remarkable under the circumstances. It is still more amazing when you stop to consider the staggering load placed upon it by the McAdoo and Chicago awards and the increased cost of all materials, ranging from 54% to as high as 384%. The C.P.R., notwithstanding the great increase in rates, only came through by the skin of its teeth, showing the smallest surplus in years, and it was not behind in betterments, as was the case with the Canadian National Railways; at least to nothing like the same extent.

Let us not lose our wits, but think calmly and reasonably. The whole problem is one of technical management. The appointment of Sir Joseph Flavelle or any other financier to chief control would not help in the solution of the problem one *iota.* It would only embarrass. Sir Joseph Flavelle is not a railway man, though he is a highly successful financier. The C.P.R. needs highly suc-

cessful financiers and has them; but in the case of the Canadian National Railways the question of finance is lifted off the shoulders of the staff. This is a supreme advantage. Their business is not to finance the road—that is a government proposition entirely—but to run it as economically as may be, get all the business they can, and keep the system up to the top-notch of efficiency. They are doing it, and it is not their fault that world conditions are such as to preclude, in the meantime, the avoidance of a deficit. Almost every road in the United States—even the Pennsylvania and New York Central systems—show large deficits.

We assert without fear of contradiction that the one problem before the management of the National systems is to run the various roads economically and *to get business.* No financier in Canada, no matter how astute, can lessen the fixed charges. They were taken over by the Government when it bought control of the stock, and they are there and must remain there (an old man of the sea, if you like) till they are paid off or, possibly, refunded later on.

There is only one alternative to the present status—default on interest and the throwing of the system into the hands of receivers. Such a course is simply inconceivable. It would shatter the credit of Canada at one blow. It would be an eternal disgrace. We could not survive it. Moreover, the bondholders, in such an event, would have recourse to the courts and force the various Provinces to make good their guarantees. Could they do so? The whole North-West and British Columbia would at once go bankrupt. What would happen then?

We may put out of court at once the handing over of this vast system to the C.P.R. for the very simple reason that the people would not allow it. They are beginning to take a deep pride in their ownership and are perfectly convinced that when the G.T.R., with its American connections, becomes part of the national system, the deficits will gradually lessen in volume and finally disappear. And the conviction is sound—sound in sentiment and sound in finance. And what is more, they propose to keep politics out, and are convinced that the system must be run *as for dividends* as though it were a private concern, and they can see no good reason why this should not be done. As a matter of fact it can be done and we believe is being done at the present moment. We shall not always have depression and lean years. Many branches that do not pay at the present time will pay ten years hence and pay handsomely. The advantage is with the Canadian National Railways. It has the lowest grade on the continent and traverses New Ontario. The stretch of C.PR.. mileage around the north shore never paid and never will pay much; but the more northern route has unbounded possibilities. It is closer to the mining area

and runs through the great clay belt. Still further, it is just possible that the territory contiguous to the Cochrane-Moncton section (practically unexplored) may yet prove a rich and profitable field of exploitation; and there is this advantage, that it will have the whole population of Quebec to draw on—no small asset, since the *habitant* loves the life of the woods and is a born pioneer. Its resources in pulp and water power are practically illimitable.

But suppose that, the C.P.R. being eliminated, it were determined to hand over the system to a new company—sell it to a syndicate in short. Would we be any better off? Could this be done without consulting the people; asking a mandate from them; in short, without a general election? It could not. No parliament would dare to do so. But for purposes of argument we will suppose that this plan is in contemplation. Where would such a syndicate get the colossal sum required in the present disordered condition of the world's finances? It is our reasoned conviction that they would not be able to raise one farthing for any such purpose. We may be sure that the C.P.R. (and who could blame them?) would not stand idly by with folded hands. That is not the way of rivals for the world's gold. The C.P.R. represents a billion of capital. It is, like every corporation in the world, keen to preserve its rights and values. And it would have great power in the markets of the world. The truth is that only one power in Canada can handle the financial end of the problem—the Government of Canada. No company or syndicate could do so. And even if the seventy millions were raised and the stock bought and paid for, would annual deficits miraculously cease? Who believes it? If the magnificently managed Pennsylvania Railway, running through the richest and most populous portion of the North American continent, shows a deficit, what warrant have we for supposing that a miracle would be worked in the case of the Canadian National Railways? What then would result? Bankruptcy or never-ending government aid. We would, in fact, be no better off, but infinitely worse, with the added humiliation that the system would be out of our control.

The C.P.R. management (we are presuming that the *Montreal Gazette* and certain Montreal financial papers speak with inner knowledge) would be well advised to attend strictly to their own business. We all want a prosperous and a highly prosperous C.P.R. because it will mean a prosperous C.N.R. The people of Canada have no animus against the C.P.R.; though they do not forget that had it not been for their generous assistance in years of trial there would be no C.P.R. in existence; but they are in no mood to take advice from them in this matter. These are days of bold and far-reaching consolidations, and if the need should ever arise to consolidate the whole transportation system of Canada in the interest

of the solvency of the country, the people of Canada would not hesitate to go a step further. In any event, we propose to see this venture through, and no dread of deficits will intimidate us for a moment. Rightly or wrongly, the people of Canada believe that, in the end, their noble faith in their country and in themselves will be justified and that the Canadian National Railways will prove an asset so valuable that the enormous debt we are at present carrying will soon be taken care of by its augmented earnings.

That the present preposterous wages will tumble to normal is inevitable, not only in the case of the Canadian railways, but also in the case of those of the United States. Bituminous coal has already fallen to a reasonable level. Iron and steel production are on the down grade; lumber is rapidly reaching its old standard. The end of high prices is in sight. If only our national system is run *as for dividends* and political meddling is sternly repressed, we need not bother as to deficits. If we take care of honest and efficient non-partisan administration the deficits will take care of themselves.

## HUNTING FUNDS

THE people of Canada are faced with the responsibility of collecting from some source or other, during the fiscal year of 1921, an amount somewhere in excess of $500,000,000 of the current year's expenditures. To meet these disbursements the Government raises money from different sources such as income tax, tariff, etc.

From Halifax to Vancouver have come insistent protests against taxation. Suggestions have from time to time been made by persons who thought they had discovered a panacea. It must be borne in mind that any remedy to alleviate the burden of taxation must be one that will operate in the same manner in Halifax as in Vancouver the same in Winnipeg as in Dawson City.

Claims have been advanced that the railway situation of Canada has caused all our trouble. The claim has been made not only by the press, but also upon the floor of Federal and Provincial parliaments that the railway situation as it exists at present, both in Canada and in the United States, is the direct result of the McAdoo award. While there can be no doubt that the McAdoo award has contributed very considerably to the railway situation in the way of imposing a tremendous wage bill upon railway corporations both here and in the United States, that is not, in Canada, the most serious factor in connection with the railway system.

In 1903 the only transcontinental line in Canada was the Canadian Pacific Railway, a corporation which, under splendid management, and by being able to transport goods or passengers entirely around the globe, had developed a transportation system second to

none in the world. Judicious lines of feeders and branch lines contributed to the welfare of the company. The early history of the Canadian Pacific Railway, however, was very full of grief and difficulty. There were many times in the history of the construction of the C.P.R. that bankruptcy and ruin stared the company, and those connected with it, in the face, and it was only by most desperate financing and by grim determination on the part of the promoters of the company that it was enabled to pull through.

In 1896 MacKenzie, Mann & Co. constructed a small line of railway which ultimately developed into the Canadian Northern Railway system. The Canadian Northern Railway Company financed their undertaking by means of bonds guaranteed by the governments of the provinces through which the railway passed. A country such as Canada, with a sparse population settled along a narrow strip not more than two hundred and fifty miles wide along the southern border of the country, could not support more than two transcontinental lines.

In 1903, however, the government of the day decided to lend assistance to the Grand Trunk Railway to build a third transcontinental line. This was done at a cost to the country of many millions of dollars. It was a colossal blunder for which the Conservative party of the day was not responsible. Then came the war. Ten or twelve years of prosperity had existed in Canada previous to the war. The cost of labor and materials commenced to rise and steadily mounted upwards; general business to a large extent ceased to exist during the war, except such industries as were directly connected with our military operations. In times of prosperity railway companies had gone forward putting in branch lines and temporary lines, striving eagerly in competition to extend into new and hitherto unopened portions of the country. When business became stagnant the inevitable followed. The Canadian railways became unable to pay their way. The Canadian Northern Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway were not backward in coming to the Federal government and asking them to take over the indebtedness of the roads and provide for payment of interest and principal upon the bonds and to provide for repairs which the companies had no money to make. Repairs were absolutely necessary: road beds were in bad shape; hundreds of miles of road required ballasting; engines were going out of the roundhouses to start on long hauls without being properly repaired and without being in shape to do the work.

To allow these roads to go into bankruptcy or into the hands of a receiver would mean a tremendous burden upon the country, as Federal and Provincial governments would be called upon to make good their guarantees. The Province of Manitoba, to take only one instance, was liable for some $34,000,000 of bonds for the Mani-

toba division of the Canadian Northern Railway. The Federal government did the one thing that could be done, and that was, take over the roads. It had to save the whole North-West from bankruptcy. These roads show a deficit of over $70,000,000 for last year's operations, or, roughly, over two hundred thousand dollars per day. The burden of maintaining these roads rests upon the country at large irrespective of who is the governing body at Ottawa. No matter what party is in control after the next election, that party is faced with the railway problem in Canada and the task of working out some system to get out of the mess into which enthusiasm and undue ambition have landed the country.

One of the suggestions made by Mr. Crerar, leader of the National Progressive party, is that a survey should be made of the government-controlled railways in Canada, lines of railway should be torn up and where there formerly was railway service none should be given. Just where the scrapping should commence and where it should end, Mr. Crerar does not say. If, however, Mr. Crerar's suggestion were to be followed and certain lines were torn up or abandoned, what would become of the settlers who have gone into those parts of the country relying on either the Grand Trunk or the Canadian Northern railways to transport their farm produce? In certain isolated cases where the railways run very close to each other it might be possible to scrap one of the lines without injuring the settlers to a very great extent, but these points are so few and far between and the relief so trifling that the scheme is hardly worth while considering as being a panacea for the railway situation.

During the war there was a request made by the Imperial Government to the Canadian Government for rails. Rails were not available from any of the mills. The Government then commenced a survey to find out whether rails could not be furnished by taking up some unused track. A survey was started at Halifax, but it was not until the country west of Edmonton was reached that a spot was found where the Government thought that it might take up a portion of the steel. All points to the east had objected so strenuously to the taking up of rails, and the cutting off of transportation facilities, that nothing could be done until Edmonton was reached. The Government finally picked out a spot where the Canadian Northern Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway lines paralleled for some miles, and in the face of tremendous protestations from the settlers in that portion of the country, some miles of rails were taken up. That portion of the country has never got over it. While looking at the map of Canada as a whole it might seem quite practicable to take up one or two lines of railway running five miles apart, but taking up one of these lines means that a farmer who lives one mile from the station may be placed six miles from a

station and the farmer living five miles from a station ten miles from a station, increasing his haul, increasing his cost of marketing his farm produce, and reducing the value of the land for which he may have paid a good price owing to its close proximity to the market.

Another suggestion made by Mr. Crerar is that a valuation of the roads be made and the Government then write off the amount above that value. That suggestion is a good deal like suggesting to a man who has a quarter section of land worth $3,000 with a mortgage of $3,000 against it, that in order to improve his financial position he will say to his mortgagee: "Your mortgage was $3,000. It is now $1,500. I am going to carry on my farming operations as if I owed only $1,500 instead of $3,000, and I am $1,500 ahead." It must be remembered that in the case of both railways tremendous bond issues are outstanding upon which interest and principal have to be met irrespective of whether the railway companies are, or are not, making money. It is impossible for the Government to say to the holders of the securities: "You are the holders of $100,000,000 of bonds of the Canadian Northern Railway Company. We have not been able to make things go, and we are, without your consent or approval, writing off fifty per cent of those bonds because the valuator's report shows that the road is worth considerably less than there is against it." The same thing applies to the Grand Trunk Railway. The position of the Government is that it has acquired two roads with tremendous obligations against them. They cannot improve this position by deciding, without consulting the bondholders, to write off 50% of the liabilities, nor can a matter of book-keeping straighten the whole thing out. Mr. Crerar's solution is a book-keeping one, but not a practical one.

What the official opposition propose to do with the railway problem in Canada no one knows. While members of the Opposition have railed loudly against the expenses of government railways, they must remember that if they come into power at the next election they will have that problem with them. What they propose to do with it no one knows.

Suggestions have been made that the Government sell out their railway systems, but where, or for what price, has not been suggested. No body of financial men, no transportation organization, would, at the present time, even consider taking over either of these railways with the present condition of finance the world over. A suggestion has been made that these roads be sold out to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. That corporation certainly does not want three transcontinental lines, and the suggestion is an impossible one. The people of Canada would not permit a complete monopoly of transportation in private hands.

Last year the Government raised, through the agency of the tariff, a sum something like $140,000,000, being something over one-fourth of the entire revenue raised by the country. It has been suggested that we adopt free trade. The Farmers' Party advocate free trade. Mr. King, when in a farming community, advocates free trade. Let us have free trade. Free trade, theoretically at least, is splendid for the common people. We will bear in mind, however, inasmuch as the tariff has produced $140,000,000 of the moneys actually raised by the Government, that when we have free trade we won't have the $140,000,000. We need that money to pay our way, and having lost the tariff, must find some substitute for it. Taking the population of Canada at eight millions, the amount raised last year for every man, woman and child in Canada by way of the tariff, amounted to $17.50. Taking the average Canadian family to be five, we have $87.50 for every family in Canada which we will have to raise from some other source. This money might be raised in two ways. First, by a direct land tax; second, by an income tax.

In 1918 ten per cent of the people paying income tax were farmers and numbered not quite thirteen thousand. Let us presume when a further income tax is substituted for the tariff that ten per cent of the people, being the farmer population of those paying income tax, should pay that increased income tax. The farmers' ten per cent should then pay $14,000,000 as their share of the moneys lost by taking off the tariff which would mean that each well-to-do farmer would be liable to an income tax of $10.80 a year for the pleasure of having done away with the tariff. Free trade advocates in the House would not be very popular with their farmer electors were this to be done.

The alternative to the income tax is the land tax. For psychological reasons it is far easier to impose a concealed taxation than one which is patent. If you ask a man to pay twenty-five cents a dozen for eggs he will do so without a murmur, but if you ask him to pay twenty-three cents a dozen for the eggs and two cents tax to the government, although he pays exactly the same amount he will kick about it and endeavor in every way to avoid that taxation. That is not peculiar to any portion of Canada or to any one part of the world. Taxation has never been popular, and the only way to get taxation across is to serve it like liver pills in a chocolate-coated dose.

There is another feature to be considered, and that is just what effect taking down the tariff would have on prices. In the first place it must be borne in mind that the manufacturing interests in Canada have a population of about eight million to cater to, and that this population is sparsely spread along a strip three thousand miles in

length and about two hundred and fifty in width, with natural barriers of lakes and rocks separating the east and west. No such condition prevails south of the line. There, the manufacturer has a potential clientele of one hundred million in densely settled areas and no such great natural barrier between the east and west as in Canada. Naturally with a larger market, goods can be manufactured more cheaply.

It is a well-known elementary principle that if you have two bodies of water, one with a depth of 20 feet and the other with a depth of 10 feet, and cut a passage between them, that your result will not be two bodies of water 10 feet deep, but two bodies of water 15 feet deep.

Cash wheat in Winnipeg to-day is $1.96; cash wheat in Chicago is $1.26. Take down the barrier, permit absolutely free trade to exist between the two countries, and what will the western farmer get? Possibly $1.60, so that the cry for free trade is not going to operate to the benefit of the western farmer, but rather to his detriment.

What would be the result if the tariff was taken down in regard to manufactured articles? The Canadian manufacturers, who support a very considerable portion of the Canadian population, would be forced into competition with a country twelve times larger in population and with far greater facilities of distribution. American manufacturing institutions, which have built up large businesses in Canada owing to the tariff law, would close their Canadian branches and concentrate their efforts on their American factories, shipping the finished product to Canada, thus putting thousands of skilled mechanics out of work. It is very doubtful if the common people would benefit at all, as the American manufacturer, having no Canadian competition, but having the Canadian field to himself, would make prices to suit himself and get as large profits as possible.

Free trade would mean doing away with our present system of obtaining $140,000,000 towards the expenses of the country. That $140,000,000 has to be raised. A practical means other than the tariff is not apparent. So much for the actual raising of that money. What are the benefits? A complete disorganization of our Canadian manufacturers and the throwing of thousands of skilled mechanics and factory workers out of work. If this is a benefit let us have free trade.

Winnipeg. NOR-'WESTER.

## SHALL QUEBEC DOMINATE CANADA?

THE domination of any one Province in Federal politics would be an exceedingly bad thing for the country at large. The principle *Divide et Impera*, which may be described as the usual practice of autocracies, can never be made to work in the case of democracies, where unanimity and harmony is the law of politics.

Burke put the matter in its final and permanent form when, having in mind the ideal constitution of parties (in this case the Whig Junto), he wrote that "No men could act in concert who did not act with confidence; no men could act with confidence who were not bound together by *common opinions*, *common affections* and *common interests*." For groups and group government Burke (and to the day of his death Burke was the ideal of the late Sir Wilfrid Laurier) had an almost savage contempt. Speaking of the "knots" or groups of his day, he describes them as men "who are combined for no public purpose, but only as a means of furthering with *joint* strength their *private* and *individual* advantage." He draws this picture of insincere political combinations, and we commend his weighty words to those representatives from Quebec who, misled, as they are being misled, by the vain dream of power through a rickety combination with the free trade farmers of the North-West, the radical laborites, and the dissatisfied "come-outers," hope to put their Province in a position to completely dominate Dominion politics. "When men," he writes, "are not acquainted with each others' principles, nor experienced in each other's talents, nor at all practised in their mutual habitudes and dispositions by joint efforts of business; no personal confidence; no common interest subsisting among them; it is evidently impossible that they can act a public part with uniformity, perseverance or efficacy."

Having in mind these words, it is safe to say that were Edmund Burke alive to-day he would have counselled Quebec to avoid any alliance, or appearance of an alliance, with the North-West or radical-labor-farmer groups, and to throw in its lot with those who stand firmly for tried and immemorial usages in government. Burke was a zealot for that fairness and equilibrium which is best described as constitutional.

The situation in Canadian politics to-day is unprecedented and extraordinary. It is so ludicrous in its hypocrisy; so full of satiric antinomies, so obviously theatrical and unreal that men of plain sense and understanding have great difficulty in restraining their indignation whenever they try to envisage it. Surely fate never performed a more ironic trick than when she placed the Hon. Mackenzie King in the position of the chosen and anointed of Quebec. Quebec, notwithstanding Lapointe's Calgary speech, is solidly for

protection. Sir Lomer Gouin is our authority for that. Free trade would destroy her overnight. One should suppose naturally, therefore, that her representatives at Ottawa would take extreme care to make sure that her official leader would be safe and sound on this question, which is so vital to her well-being. Is he? Who shall say? He speaks with many voices, when, if he were morally honest, he would speak with but one. If his approaches to Drury and Crerar (both of whom are uncompromisingly for free trade) are being made at the instigation and with the connivance of the *real* leader of the Quebec Liberals, viz., Mr. Ernest Lapointe, and is part of an organized plan, then all we have got to say is that when the full meaning of the policy of hypocrisy being forwarded is clearly grasped by the sensible people of Quebec and the rest of the people of Canada, as it surely will be, there will be a day of reckoning, and it will not be long delayed. The Conservative party in that Province will come back with a rush. We do not believe that the people of Quebec are devoid of political morality, as we are sure they are not of common honesty and fair play in the ordinary affairs of life. This, we may add, is a question not to be trifled with.

Nor is constitutional versus group-government a mere academic question. It is a challenge to all that we Britishers hold dear. It may be said with truth that the whole struggle of the British race has been from earliest times a conflict against groups intent on selfish ends. Sometimes the instinct that holds to unity and law has been directed against kings, sometimes against the arrogance of caste, sometimes against wealth viciously used, oftentimes against the mob; but always what was sought was the triumph of the principle of justice and fair-play for all classes alike. The majesty of law consists in this, that behind it, giving it life, is the doctrine of *common consent.* The state results from a surrender of certain natural powers on the part of each individual to the end that he may freely exercise without transgression or injury whatever ends he may consider desirable. But when (and this is the curse and blasphemy of the whole bad business) associations are formed, whether as separate political units, such as the U.F.O., labor unions or corporate monopolies, for the express, naked purpose of wresting control from the majority for selfish ends, then that vague but irresistible force known as The People arises and a finish is put to the business. In the end the general will must prevail. Since the days of Aristotle the state has existed for only one end—the general good—and no combination can survive that is not based upon this fundamental fact.

The situation is unprecedented and extraordinary, and yet the salient outlines are simple enough. The confusion has been caused by a few vain agitators who seem callously indifferent to the actual

condition of things in the world at large, and are so vain, so puffed up with conceit, so lacking in the fundamental elements of fair-play as to place their personal vanity and lust of notoriety and power above the well-being of the country.

We will take as the first example that venerable organ of Liberalism known as the *Toronto Globe*. Because the Prime Minister, who is temperamentally a fair-minded man, has held out the olive branch to Quebec it shrieks in fury and imputes the basest motives to him. It was surprised and disgusted that his first public utterance as executive head of the country should have been largely devoted to a plea for a good understanding with our French-Canadian brethren. Supposing it was politics, was it not good politics? Ought we not to live in peace and harmony with Quebec? Who dare deny it? Still further, what right has *The Globe* to speak for Quebec? Quebec, we may be sure, is quite able to speak for itself. It may in a moment of unwisdom reject the kindly advances made by the official head of the National party and refuse to let bygones be bygones. It may conceivably stagger along under the heavy and self-imposed burden of the most inept leader it ever had. We do not know. But surely *The Globe* of all papers in Canada has the least right to speak for it. And for this reason! It has most meticulously refrained from editorial endorsement of the leader chosen by Quebec. It, in fact, dare not do so. No wonder its influence is steadily waning with all thoughtful men. Quebec distrusts its sincerity profoundly. It has no vital message. When it cut with the National party it became an Ishmaelite. It has scolded the U.F.O. farmers and alienated them; it has taken no clear-cut line on the tariff; it cannot even claim to represent the win-the-war Liberals, who, indeed, have no use for it. As Mr. J. J. Morrison remarked in his Goderich speech, it is "without a home." That, indeed, exactly expresses the situation. We are much mistaken if it has not infuriated the Lapointe Liberals by its refusal to see a heaven-sent statesman in one who is, obviously, a clear case of arrested political development. Constant scolding soon tires and generally breeds indifference; and this fate has befallen an organ which had its inception in the vilest abuse of Quebec that was ever penned by any Canadian journalist.

The late Robert Louis Stevenson in an impish moment placed John Calvin, Ninon de Linclos and Voltaire in the same room and engaged them in sprightly conversation. But surely even this combination is surpassed by the common agreement in abuse of the National party by the Hon. Robert Rogers, *The Globe*, the Hon. Mackenzie King, the Hon. Alex. Crerar, and Michael Clark. That this curious group should be found in the same boat is surely one of the marvels of the time. "Fortune makes strange bedfellows." *The Globe*, appa-

rently, is eager to welcome any one who will throw a brick at the object of its insensate and irrational hate. The growing popularity of the Prime Minister seems to madden it. The truth is that the Hon. Robert Rogers is politically dead and doesn't know it. He is of those who fail to see that these are the days of wide-eyed statesmanship, and that it is utterly impossible to bring back the already vanished past. We do not believe that he represents anything but the old senseless desire to recreate narrow party orthodoxies. The war proved that the differences subsisting between Liberals and Conservatives were largely mythical and had been outgrown. In a flash it was seen that loyalty to the basic instincts of the race and the sound conviction that protection is necessary to our industrial life were common to both the historic groups known as Liberal and Conservative. We cannot go back even if we would. In the face of internal discord, the hateful offspring of naked class-selfishness, all truly thoughtful men must band together, since division into groups and classes would mean the ruin of all our hopes. The new alignment is clearly between selfish groups and the upholders of constitutional government. But that *The Globe* should feature the Hon. Robert Rogers and print his embittered strictures on men "whose shoes latchets he is unworthy to unloose" only goes to show what psychologists, indeed, have long recognized, that reason and hate cannot subsist together. So far as the Hon. Robert Rogers is concerned *The Globe*, eager to grasp at any justification for its perfidious and mistaken course in deserting constitutional government in a critical hour, is willing to make use of his chronic bitterness, not that it has gone back on its former editorials respecting his record, but that, for the moment, it would, and from any quarter, augment its irrational hate.

We do not know who is responsible for the peregrinations of Dr. Michael Clark. He has been described as an "orator"; if oratory mean literature, and surely it does, he is not that. He is a very voluble, unstable person with a pet obsession. Men possessed of a single idea sometimes, to be sure, succeed in changing the fate of nations, but as a rule they have been men of the type of John Wesley or Cobden or Wycliffe. Such men are moral stars of the first magnitude. It is their characters that triumph over all obstacles. Absolute sincerity carried to the point of sacrifice and suffering is a weapon of almost irresistible power. Such men do not abuse their opponents with coarse scurrility; they practise "prayer and fasting." Dr. Michael Clark was elected not as an absolute free trader to the present Parliament; he was carried like a limp seaweed on the crest of a breaker and found himself in Ottawa. Instead of following Crerar in his lamentable desertion he should have, as a stout Imperialist and a believer, therefore, in constitutional practices, stuck by the

ship; either this, or, following the custom of English gentlemen, resigned his seat and gone back to his constituency for endorsation of his new course. Had he done so we believe he would have been defeated. He is abler than Crerar and his heart is not in the U.G.G. movement. He has said no kindly and heartening words for the National Progressive party. His fate will be to wander "in a dry and thirsty land where no water is" (or anything else)—a hard fate! So far as the National party is concerned they could ask nothing better than that an itinerary should be arranged for "Red Michael," for wherever he may go the result of his speechifying will be to close the ranks of sensible people. The people of Canada have had quite enough of unstable equilibrium.

As for the Hon. Alex Crerar and his National Progressive party, it seems to have fallen quite flat. It can never hope to be anything but an insignificant rump. The same fate will—indeed, has—overtaken the Hon. Mr. Drury's People's party. They should have stuck to their magic symbols. The U.G.G. and U.F.O. were conceived in naked selfishness—frank class-movements. But against what? Against whom? We were told, "The Interests." Yet the Hon. Alex Crerar is reputed to be a shrewd business man and, indeed, a millionaire. The Hon. Mr. Drury is supposed to be a "warm" man too. Doubtless they have their surplus funds stored safely away in good securities. They do not stick their capital under the carpet or bury it in a napkin. Both have the reputation of being "shrewd fellows," quite able to look after their own. They do. They have no hold over the working men, and are profoundly distrusted by the big business men of the country. Both these men talk big about what the people of Canada are going to do, and in their ignorance and conceit have assumed, on their own initiative, the leadership of the nation. We will put this question to them: "Can they point to a single spontaneous public meeting held anywhere in the country that has issued a mandate to them to save the country?" Is it not all a dream? For our part we are humble enough to admit that we do not know what the people of Canada are going to do a year hence. No one can dispose in advance of a people. It were insolence to even attempt it. All we are sure of is that the ship of government is safely in harbor for the nonce, and that after it has refitted it will, the weather being propitious, set sail for the open sea with a loyal crew and a tried captain. The waves that rock it are but the back-wash of the gigantic breakers on which all the other political ships of the world are being tossed. Against the hard common-sense of the Canadian those angry waves of unrest will beat in vain.

It is our reasoned conviction that the attempt of Crerar to change the U.G.G. into the National Progressive Party and the attempt of Drury to change the U.F.O. into the People's Party is

the beginning of the end. We believe that if the Liberal nomination for the Dominion House (say Halton!) were offered to Drury to-morrow he would accept it and abandon the whole U.F.O. movement (of which, in view of what has happened, he must be thoroughly sick) to J. J. Morrison, that hard-working, practical farmer Burnaby, and that pure and holy patriot Mr. James Simpson—the immortal triumvirate who called it into being.

Wood, of Alberta, "the man from Missouri," has served notice that the National Progressive Party is not for him; and in any struggle between Crerar and Wood, and it may come, Mr. Crerar will have a lot of explaining to do. If Mr. Drury should in the end come out openly as a free trade Liberal candidate for the Dominion House he also will have some hard sledding. Both these men are on record as absolute free traders. Mr. Drury let the cat out of the bag during his examination before the Board of Commerce two years ago, and Mr. Crerar has been frankness itself. The only difference between McMaster of Brome, "Red Michael" and the Hon. Mr. Crerar is that the two farmer doctrinaires are for immediate incidence, whereas the Hon. Alex Crerar, although having pronounced sentence of death on the doctrine of protection, in loving-kindness and mercy is willing to defer the date of execution to a slightly later date. But why should Quebec be mixed up in this tangle? Let the sane men of that great Province line up with Ontario in defence of our constitutional way of doing things, and not be led into all sorts of waste places only in the end to imperil those rights which a truly constitutional government can alone be trusted to observe.

## LORD SHAUGHNESSY'S OFFER TO THE GOVERNMENT

THE public should clearly understand that what Lord Shaughnessy offers is not that the Canadian National Railways should take over the Canadian Pacific Railway, but that the C.P.R. should take over the C.N.R. That is a horse of a different color! The quiet assumption of the noble lord—and it vitiates all his arguments, and is, indeed, the crux of the whole argument—is that in some mysterious way the present C.P.R. management can be continued in perpetuity. He must be deeply imbued with the value of the hereditary idea to hold such a faith. We would like to ask a sharp question right here: Is the C.P.R. more efficiently managed than the C.N.R.? We desire to cast no stones. The C.P.R. represents a capital of a billion. That is a truly colossal sum. It is vitally necessary to the well being of Canada that that system should be prosperous and highly prosperous. The more prosperous it is the more prosperous Canada as a whole will be, including the C.N.R.

as a part of Canada. We all wish it well. We are all proud of the C.P.R. That, we submit, is not the question. We are concerned just now with but one question, viz., Is the C.P.R. more efficiently, more honestly managed than the C.N.R.? We do not believe it is. We believe both systems are being efficiently and honestly managed; we believe, in fact, that the men in control of the National system of railways are, man for man, as good as those in control of the C.P.R. Why, indeed, should not they be? The most of them received their training under C.P.R. auspices. But granted for the sake of argument, that they are less efficient, what reason is there for supposing that when the present C.P.R. staff have gone the way of all flesh they will be succeeded by others equally wise, honest and efficient? It is surely carrying faith in the hereditary principle a little too far to assume that the C.P.R. management will be maintained in perpetuity at its present high standard. As a matter of fact no such a guarantee could be given by anyone, subject as all are to mistaken judgment and to the law of the dissipation of energy. It is a fatal flaw. The present condition of the Canadian National Railways is not due to any inefficiency of the staff—the staff is magnificent—but to purely financial causes with which the staff has nothing whatever to do. Their business is—the world-situation being what it is and the roads being as they are—to carry on, and, consistently with efficient service, earn for the government every dollar they can. This they are doing, and if only the politicians will keep their hands off and allow them to run the roads *as for dividends*, we need not, in the long run, have any fear of the results. Ten, or even twenty, years is but a moment in the life of a nation; and it must not be forgotten that our undeveloped resources will take care easily, not only of C.N.R. deficits, but of our vast public debts.

A railway is an eternal thing. Once started it is there for all time, like a water-fall; and there is this to be said for government control, that the management is for ever relieved of going into the markets of the world for cash, and in no danger, therefore, of ever being made the sport of rival financiers greedy for complete domination. The history of nearly all the great American railways has been a record of financial struggle for mastery. One need only recall the terrific fight that took place for control of the Great Northern. Hundreds of instances might be cited in proof of this.

The picture Lord Shaughnessy draws of the future of the Canadian National Railways is dark and gloomy enough. Some of us have a wider and deeper faith in Canada and in the sturdy perseverance of the Canadian people. We have here the potential wealth of ten empires. We could plaster a mortgage of ten billions on this country and pay it off in a hundred years. Who doubts it? One of these days China will be our greatest customer. She is just

shaking off her lethargy and becoming modern. We may expect to get a lion's share of her trade, for we are the great land bridge designed by Nature herself between the Occident and the Orient. Give us a population of twenty millions, and we may have that in twenty years, and the financial aspect which at present troubles us—and that is well—will be one of the least of our worries.

Emerson says somewhere that "We see with the eyes with which we came to see." We may admit all that the noble lord says as to the complete folly of the Laurier administration in building the Grand Trunk Pacific and the National Transcontinental. They ought not to have been attempted. We can see now clearly that the Canadian Northern Railway should have been taken over by the parties interested in 1910 and joined up with the G.T.R. Had that been done we would have been saved hundreds of millions of dollars and the Grand Trunk Pacific and National Transcontinental would never have been built. It was attempted and failed. We believe MacKenzie & Mann were willing to enter into an arrangement at the time. Some day the truth touching these negotiations is bound to come out. It was of the nature of a pure tragedy that some arrangement was not entered into. However, that is all dead and gone. What the late Mr. Hayes clearly saw was that with its splendid American connections all the G.T.R. needed was a western outlet. We believe the G.T.R. is a magnificent property, and we cannot understand why Lord Shaughnessy should desire to keep it out of the ring. Why, if it would be a good thing for the Canadian National Railways under C.P.R. control to make traffic arrangements with the G.T.R., would it not be a good thing for the Canadian National Railways to take over the G.T.R.? This, of course, would isolate the C.P.R., but then the C.P.R. is financially strong enough—thanks to its immense reserves in land—the gift of the Canadian people—to stand alone. There may not be room for three systems in Canada; there certainly is room enough for two. The G.T.R. will be no incubus. It will add strength and immense strength. It will earn its fixed charges, and, we believe, will earn increasingly large surpluses as the years roll on. It may even be that during the trying first years the surplus earnings of the G.T.R. will go a long way to reducing the inevitable deficit on the western lines. It would be folly not to take it over in view of the fact that American connections and eastern terminals are absolutely essential to the Canadian National system. The present Government is well advised and patriotic in the course it has taken, and the whole heft of public sentiment is behind them.

Lord Shaughnessy criticizes, and it indeed sounds strange coming from such a quarter, the four-tenths grade and light-curvature theory put into practice. He boldly states that it would have been

better to have built flimsily until traffic should warrant a complete modern up-to-date reconstruction. We should have supposed that the experience of the C.P.R. itself would have cured him of this fallacy. Had the C.P.R. been built with a four-tenths grade and easy curves, how many tens of millions would have been saved! We will venture to say that there is not a railway man of repute on the American continent who will agree with him in this contention. Railways are built as permanent, one might almost say as everlasting structures. They are "not for an age but for all time." Here again a line of Emerson comes pat: "What is excellent is permanent." What earthly use would there be in putting down rails on one lift of gravel, or two, if three be necessary? The whole theory of modern economy is based on the principle that if by spending generously on first-cost, capital account, you can save in the long run in lessened interest and maintenance charges, it is wise to do so. We over-built, no doubt, but we over-built well and not flimsily, and the annual upkeep is greatly less on that account. If the traffic is not there it is not there, and we must patiently wait for it; but the cost of upkeep is reduced to a minimum because we had the good sense and courage to build right in the first place. Every true economy is equivalent to an increase in capital value; is, in fact, an addition to capital. In the case of the Canadian National Railways the extremely low transcontinental grade enables one locomotive to do the work of three working on a 2.20 grade (the C.P.R. average), and represents a saving equivalent to the interest on $200,000,000. Some day the traffic will come. Nations can afford to wait.

It is a little difficult to treat seriously the terms proffered to the Government. Lord Shaughnessy confesses that he is playing off his own bat. We believe him, and yet we are quite sure that the shareholders would bless him for ever if his scheme should go through. But there is altogether too much "You take the buzzard and I'll take the turkey; or I'll take the turkey and you take the buzzard" about it. Just what is meant, *e.g.*, by "extraneous assets"? These are to be administered, we are told, by a committee of trustees, or, as an alternative, by an entirely separate board of directors. We presume these particular assets comprise everything except the railway—unsold lands, hotels, telegraphs, ships, mines, water-powers and timber-limits. Would these at once become Government property? Are they to be thrown in? The point is by no means clear. If not, the holders of the stock would draw two sets of dividends: one from a separate holding company, the other from the Government—precisely as they do now—3% from lands, 7% from earnings.

But after all, the main point here is the perpetual guarantee. The defect in this proposal is, of course (and, having pointed it out,

we shall close), that the Government would be for ever estopped from cutting down its fixed annual charges in respect of dividends. Suppose, *e.g.*, that the present C.P.R. dividend of 10% should be agreed upon. That would remain for ever. Would the stock be saleable on the New York market? If so, the greater part of it might easily pass into American or foreign hands. The plan could not be made to work. It is full of pitfalls. The only way the Government could proceed would be to buy up the stock at its market valuation and establish legal control in precisely the same way as it has done in the case of the Canadian Northern Railway. It would be a huge undertaking even in times of abounding prosperity. At present it is entirely out of the question.

We believe Lord Shaughnessy is absolutely sincere in all he has written, but, for the reasons set forth above, we believe also that the Government is both wise and patriotic in going forward with its purchase of the G.T.R. Let the two huge systems work out their destinies in complete separation yet in generous rivalry. Canada is so vast, has such boundless possibilities, is so obviously destined for greatness that there need be no fear of ultimate disaster either in the case of the Canadian National Railways or the C.P.R.

## THE ROVERS

JAMES COBOURG HODGINS

Our blood is restless blood.
  Our feet are tingling feet.
Our sort have wandered since the flood.
  We claim no settled seat.

The waters weave a spell.
  A sorcerer is the wind.
The city's highways smack of hell.
  We leave them far behind.

Who's for north, south, east, west?
  Sou'-east or west-by-north?
Straight to the eastward seemeth best!
  Ho! let us sally forth!

Oh, we will chaff the Sphinx,
  And wash in Castalay;
We'll toss with the Grand Khan for drinks,
  And wassail through Cathay.

Tired of the east we'll hie
  To where the northers roar.
We'll watch the icebergs sailing by,
  And camp in Labrador.

## GIVE ME THE GOOD BROWN EARTH

James Cobourg Hodgins

Give me the good brown earth; the skies
That laugh o'erhead; the wild surprise
Of dawn that floods the wave-tost sea.
Give me the winds for company.

Give me the forest's undertone—
Whispering of birch and pine tree's moan—
And the dull boom of waterfalls
Shaking the solid canyon's walls.

Give me a mountain high to climb
That I may mount some peak sublime,
And gaze through the blue, pellucid air
To the heaven of heavens pure and bare.

Give me the sense of an endless space—
A timeless universe to embrace.
Give me the beauty that burns like flame
To cleanse my soul of its sin and shame.

I would be one with the lowest life—
The polyp in slime, the grass so rife;—
One with the heart of the wilding rose
That rain-drenched, sun-drawn perfume throws;—

With the shy wild things that the tangle hides;
With the spotted snake as it softly glides;
With the frightened bird as it fans the air;
With the slinking wolf in its rocky lair;—

Brother to all that fly and swim;
Caught in the chorus of one vast hymn;
Feeling the lift of the primal urge,
Of the topmost billow, the maddest surge.

Open the gates of life, oh God!
Burn in the bush, in the rock, in the sod.
Send forth the storms of Thy glory and show
That the pulse of Thy being throbs here below.

For I am sick of the noise and din;
Weary of madness and self and sin;
And I fain would go with a heart of glee
To the wide, waste places and be with Thee.